

I am most appreciative of the time that I have had in this august Chamber. I walked in and saw Billy Pitts and Bob Michel, and friends who served with me during that time, and it was a real throwback and took me back to some great memories. I felt like running up to Billy and saying, how long is this going to last? When are we going to catch the plane back home?

So thank you very much for honoring me. I join a distinguished list of people that were named in receiving this honor and I am greatly honored, and will display this plaque in a very prominent place in my office and remember fondly my days here in this House of Representatives and my association with so many of you. Thank you.

Mr. BUECHNER. Again, Dan, thank you for your service and your leadership during some challenging times.

Mr. Speaker, the Members of the association were honored and proud to serve in the United States Congress. We are continuing our service to the Nation in other ways now, but hopefully, ones that are equally effective. Again, thank you for letting us return today to this Chamber that means so much to us.

This concludes our 35th annual report by the U.S. Association of former Members of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Slattery.) The gentleman from Maryland would like to be recognized (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. I asked my dear, dear friend of a long time, Speaker Michel, glad to have you here. You former Members, I want you to know that at one point in time I went up to RAY LAHOOD in 1995. I would particularly like my Republican friends to hear this. I went up to RAY LAHOOD, who was presiding in 1995. I went up to him and I said, look, we have got 197 Democrats, and if you could just get 20 Republicans, we will elect Bob Michel speaker. But LAHOOD could not deliver, Bob. I do not know what happened.

But I always like the opportunity to come and visit with those of you who have served so well in this Congress and provided for us such an outstanding institution in which to serve. It is a little more acrimonious than when most of you served here. Perhaps that will, at some point in time, get better. But in any event, on behalf of all of us who still serve here and who have benefited by what you have done through the years, thank you very much. And I hope that you have had a great visit back.

We see you often. I see Bob on a very regular basis, but I hope that all of you are doing well. Thank you for your assistance through the years. Thank you very much.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Thank you, Mr. President. The Chair again wishes to thank the former Members of Congress for their presence here today. And for those of you who have not had an opportunity to record your presence

with the Clerk, I would invite you to do so at this time. Good luck to all of you.

The Chair would advise that the House will reconvene at approximately 10:35.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 20 minutes a.m.), the House continued in recess.

□ 1030

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN) at 10 o'clock and 35 minutes a.m.

#### PRINTING OF PROCEEDINGS HAD DURING RECESS

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the proceedings had during the recess be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and that all Members and former Members who spoke during the recess have the privilege of revising and extending their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will receive up to 10 one-minute speeches on each side.

#### END FILIBUSTER AGAINST PRISCILLA OWEN

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, throughout her career, Judge Priscilla Owen has received support from across the ideological spectrum. In 2000 she was overwhelmingly reelected to a second term on the Texas Supreme Court, receiving 84 percent of the vote. Every major newspaper in Texas endorsed her for election.

Her popularity stems from her excellence on the bench and in private practice where she distinguished herself as a litigator after earning the highest score in the State on the Texas bar exam in 1977.

On May 9, 2001, Priscilla Owen was nominated to the Fifth Circuit Court. The nomination is supported by three former Democrat judges on the Texas Supreme Court, a bipartisan group of 15 past presidents of the State Bar of Texas. However, on five separate occasions in the U.S. Senate, Democrats succeeded in blocking the vote on the floor, even though she has the votes to be confirmed, because of partisanship and politics.

Today political maneuverings stand and Judge Owen's courtroom stands

empty. Senate Democrats are holding qualified judges hostage to their extremist views and disrupting the constitutional process. That is wrong, unprecedented, and it should stop.

#### STOP THE WEAPONIZATION OF SPACE

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, the administration, through senior Air Force officials, wants the U.S. to achieve military supremacy in outer space. Dominating all earth from outer space will have an out-of-world price tag, perhaps more than \$1 trillion.

A question: Why reach for the stars with guns in our hands? Are there weapons of mass destruction on Mars?

Yesterday 28 Members of Congress signed on to H.R. 2420, a bill to stop the weaponization of space, urging the President to sign an international treaty to ban such weapons. If we work together towards creating peace on earth, we would not bring war to the high heavens.

While some fantasize about being "masters of the universe," there are 45 million Americans without health insurance. Corporations are reneging on pension obligations. Social Security is under attack. We are headed towards a \$400 billion annual budget deficit, a \$600 billion trade deficit, an \$8 trillion national debt. The cost of the war in Iraq is over \$200 billion. While we build new bases in Iraq, we close them in the United States.

Earth to Washington, D.C. Earth to Washington, D.C. D.C., call home.

#### ENSURING A STABLE VACCINE SUPPLY

(Mr. MURPHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, two quick health care issues. Each year vaccinations save \$52 billion in health care costs and 33,000 lives. However, the government's policy of selecting the lowest bidder, combined with a fear of lawsuits, has driven manufacturers out of the United States. This contributed to last year's flu vaccine shortage, where 30 million doses were lost due when a foreign manufacturer's supply was contaminated. The U.S. Congress needs to follow through with incentives to secure more U.S.-based vaccine manufacturers.

Secondly, today's news in the paper about Type II diabetes was disturbing. One point two million more cases appear per year, costing \$132 billion. Type II diabetes is caused by poor diet and lack of exercise, and as Members of Congress we need to urge all Americans to make sure they take better care of themselves for this disease that causes stroke, heart attack, kidney failure,